Committee of the FCI. FCI may be authorised to sell the stocks in the open market either through auction in prefixed lots or by fixation of sale prices keeping in view the prevailing market conditions.

(v) To increase export of wheat and rice including lustre lost wheat, provide WTO compatible subsidies for exports of wheat, wheat products and rice in accordance with the decision taken on 5th February, 2002.

(vi) To fix no quantitative restrictions on the exports of rice, wheat and wheat products, subject to the condition that the stocks in the Central Pool will not be lower than the buffer stock of 243 lakh MTs (100 lakh MTs of rice and 143 lakhs MTs of wheat) at any point of time.

(vii) To enter into counter trade and / or extend commodity assistance in the form of foodgrains to other countries on terms to be decided on a case-to-case basis.

The decisions at S.No. (ii) to (vii) above will be valid upto 31.3.2003.

Research on consumer behaviour

2394. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are promoting research on consumer behaviour in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable;

(b) if so, the specific areas of thrust and the details of research conducted;

(c) whether any regulatory mechanism exist in the country to protect consumer and economic measures to promote sustainable consumption;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether Government have in place economic measures such as taxes or subsidies that promote sustainable consumption; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Government is not directly engaged in conducting research on consumer behaviour. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) collects data on household monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) by broad group of items every four years round for Rural and Urban India to help the Government in framing policies to ensure sustainable consumption.

(c) to (e) Essential Commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, and kerosene are supplied to consumers at subsidized rates through Targeted Public Distribution System. Foodgrains are also supplied at highly subsidized rates to the weaker and vulnerable sections of the society under the below poverty line, Antyodaya Anna Yojana, Mid- day Meal Scheme, Annapurna Scheme, Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojna and other welfare schemes. The State Civil Supplies Corporations also provide essential commodities at a reasonable price through their outlets to the consumers to ensure sustainable consumption.

BPL people in Madhya Pradesh

†2395. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified the families living below poverty line in Madhya Pradesh who are to be covered under the targeted public distribution system and if so, details thereof;

(b) whether all families have been issued special ration card and if not the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to issue ration cards at the earliest as they have less purchasing power?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM-RAJU): (a) to (c) As per the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission (1993-94) on the population base of 1.3.2000, the number of BPL households in the State of Madhya Pradesh is 34.93 lakhs. The Government of Madhya Pradesh has issued 50.40 lakh ration cards as against their estimated number of BPL families.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.